

LAST MINUTE GIFTS? TRY THE POSTAL STORE AT USPS.COM

Eagle on parade

A turkey may have its day but the postal eagle soars 365 days a year. The Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade this year featured a USPS float — the "Spirit of America."

It's a tribute to you — the hard-working men and women who collect, transport, process and deliver mail to more than 141 million families and businesses across America.



Holiday ads, starring real USPS employees

"This holiday season no one will work harder or go farther to keep us all connected." That's the message of this year's holiday TV advertising. Be sure to watch for them while you're watching the morning shows, news at night, or during prime time network programming. And about those postal workers you see in the ad? They're not actors. They're the real thing. New Hampshire District employees are featured in the ads, a tribute to their district's top-of-the-nation customer service. It's must-see TV.

Click-N-Ship and you

Hear that? It's the sound of America Click-N-Shipping through the holidays. And that's the happy sound of volume and revenue steadily growing from this online shipping solution. This month, Click-N-Ship marked a major milestone: 10 million shipping labels and the holiday season is just starting to rock 'n' roll!

Why so popular? Click-N-Ship lets customers print labels with and without postage from home or office computers. It promises desktop to doorstep ease and convenience. And that's where you complete the circle of convenience. If you're a carrier or sales and services associate, be aware that customers who use Click-N-Ship can hand their items — with postage already paid online — to their carrier or mail them in a collection box. Know it when you see it!

Domestic Priority Mail and Express Mail items with PC Postage service can be mailed in collection boxes regardless of weight. (*Stamped items 16 ounces or more cannot.*) This is because the customer has registered on www.usps.com and paid for postage with a credit card. All items with online PC Postage labels also can be given to the delivery carrier, scheduled for pickup, or dropped off at a Post Office. Hazmat question? Customers are asked online. There's more information on how to accept Click-N-Ship pieces at blue.usps.gov/delivery, or ask your postmaster or supervisor.

Let's make our holidays happy and prosperous for all!

More flexible!

Consider a Flexible Spending Account. Here are some of the over-the-counter drugs, medicines and medical care items you can claim in 2004: Clearasil, Benadryl, Pepto-Bismol, Neosporin, Kaopectate and Anbesol. Knee, wrist and ankle braces. Cough syrup, cough drops and nasal sprays. Family planning items. Glucose strips and lancets. Contact lens solutions. Bandages, first aid kits and rubbing alcohol. And more.

Questions? Call 1-800-842-2026.

Still Open

Remember: December is the month for open season deadlines.

Flexible Spending Accounts	Dec. 21
Federal Employees Health Benefits	Dec. 29
Thrift Savings Plan	Dec. 31
Annual Leave Exchange Program	Dec. 15

You can use *PostalEASE*, with some restrictions, to make changes during open season. Call *PostalEASE* at 1-877-4PS-EASE (1-877-477-3273). For Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB), belated open season elections will be accepted until 5 p.m. Central Time, Dec. 29, and you can also use the FEHB worksheet or SF-2809.

QUOTABLE

"Holiday mailing is a great opportunity to generate additional revenue as well as provide the excellent service that's the hallmark of our organization."

Chief Operating Officer Pat Donahoe

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Making it safer: for all of us

Protecting the safety of employees, the mail and the American public is a prime concern of the Postal Service. And USPS is taking another step to do just that. Ventilation and filtration systems (VFS) will be installed in more than 280 processing plants nationwide beginning next year to better protect employees against potential exposure to biological agents.

VFS captures and contains potentially hazardous airborne particulates that might be released during inbound mail processing operations. The equipment will be installed in two

places above each facility's network of machines that handles and prepares loose mail for cancellation, and above operations performed by advanced facer canceler systems (AFCS).

During mail processing, VFS will automatically and continuously vacuum air from the machinery through a series of filters that captures and contains at least 99.97% of all dust and potential contaminants.

VFS works together with Biohazard Detection Systems that also will be deployed next year. Integrated safety systems — protecting employees.

Curseen-Morris P&DC due to reopen



Government officials, postal union officials and members of the media toured the Curseen-Morris P&DC in Washington, DC. Here, APWU President William Burrus talks with a reporter. Administrative operations will be returning to the facility shortly.

Reassign online

Career bargaining-unit employees interested in reassignment opportunities have a new online tool. It's called eReassign. It allows employees to submit a reassignment request on any computer with an Internet connection — a first of its kind for self-service employee applications.

Each request can be for up to five offices and positions within a specified district. Employees also can view the status of their request online, and view offices and positions within each district.

The site is on the Web at <http://www.usps.com/employment/ereassign.htm>.

To access the system, employees need to use their eight-digit employee ID and USPS PIN.

INDUSTRYWATCH

FIRST WITH FRUITCAKE

The Postal Service beat out UPS and FedEx Ground in a recent pre-holiday shipping experiment, reports *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. The newspaper shipped three identical packages of fruitcake on Friday afternoon from Atlanta to Florida. USPS delivered the package Monday — one day earlier than its competitors and at lower cost. The article said prices varied significantly from \$5.20 for USPS to \$7.46 for UPS.

IN USPS WE TRUST

The Postal Service is the highest-ranked government entity when it comes to keeping personal information confidential, according to a survey conducted by the Ponemon Institute, reports *Federal Computer Week*. "While technology has become the great enabler of data collection and utilization, one of the biggest responsibilities ... is balancing the risks of what to collect and why, and how to use the information after it's collected," says the report.